

Fall 8-15-2002

# ENG 5000-001: Studies in Old English Language and Literature

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5 000-001

## ENGLISH 5000--Studies in Old English Language and Literature

Dr. Rosemary Buck, Associate Professor

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Mailbox: English Dept Office, Room 308 Coleman (3155)

Office Hours: 9:00-9:30 MWF and by appointment

### **Course Objective**

Our primary goal for the course will be to learn the grammar and syntax of Old English (the form of English spoken in England from a.d. 449-1066) so that we will be able to read Anglo-Saxon texts in their original language. We will translate prose selections and study variant translations of Old English poetry. A secondary goal for the course will be to have students research and explore current issues in translation and historical criticism, especially as they pertain to our reading of *Beowulf* and the above texts. We will study a variety of modern translations for the sake of comparison to get a sense of what gets lost or gained in various interpretive versions. The course also offers students an introduction to Anglo-Saxon history, culture, and art as they relate to the texts we are studying.

### **Textbooks** (available at TRS)

Cassidy and Ringler, *Bright's Old English Grammar and Reader*, 3rd edition

Donaldson (trans) and Howe (ed), *Beowulf: A Prose Translation*

Godden and Lapidge, *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*

### **Course Evaluation**

Grade for the course will be based on in-class work (informal presentations and discussion), translations, a final exam, and a research paper project. The in-class component is your preparation of the readings for class, your contribution to the discussion, and specific research and reading tasks you are given as your responsibility to present for the discussion (since this is a seminar style class). Failure to come to class adequately prepared will result in a grade of zero points for that day. Your final grade will consist of the following weighted components:

In class discussion and presentations 20%

Translations--30%

Research project--30%

Final exam-20%

Grading scale in this class is always 100-90% = A; 89-80% = B; 79-70% = C; 69-60% = D; below 60% = F.

### **Attendance**

You are expected to attend every class. **More than one unexcused absence will result in failure of the course.** If you must miss class due to a university obligation, medical reason, or emergency, you will need to leave a message on my voice mail (581-5012) before or on the day of your absence in order for your absence to be counted as an excused absence. I will assume that you are finding out from someone in the class what you've missed so that you'll be prepared for the next class meeting (note that handouts will only be distributed once; it is your responsibility to photocopy handouts from another student if you are absent). If you have an excused absence, your translation must be turned in to me on the day following the class you miss. More than one excused absence will result in additional written work on your part for your benefit to

make up for class time.

Please be respectful of other class members by coming to class on time.

**EIU's Published Definition of an excused absence:**

1. University obligation, in which case you will need to present me in advance with a letter explaining the purpose and date of your upcoming absence.
2. Emergency or medical illness, in which case you will need to leave a message on my voice mail at 581-5012 before class begins on the day of your absence.

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

**English Department Statement Concerning Plagiarism**

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assignment and a grade of N/C for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

B=*Bright's Old English Grammar and Reader*

D=Donaldson's *Beowulf*

G=Godden's *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*

\*\*This schedule should be used as a guideline, but we are likely to make changes as we go along depending on the needs of the class.

## **Course Readings for English 5000 Studies in Old English Language and Literature**

### **Week One--Aug 27**

Introduction to the course and to research sources

Historical Background

Translation: "The Lord's Prayer"

Reading: "The Seafarer (handout)

Phonetics / Old English Pronunciation and Orthography (B--Chaps. 1-4)

### **Week Two--Sept 3**

Overview of Anglo-Saxon History

Willson, *A History of England*, Chaps. 1 and 2 (handout)

"The Origins of Old English to 800 a.d.," Robert Hughes (D--pp. 61-67)

"Anglo-Saxon Society and Its Literature," Patrick Wormald (G--pp. 1-22)

Reading: "Wulf and Eadwacer" (handout)

Old English Noun Cases and Classes and The Demonstrative (B--Chaps. 13-15, and 9)

### **Week Three--Sept 10**

Translations (handouts): The Old English Bible: Luke 9:14-17

Mark 11: 15-18

Aelfric's Translation

Reading: "The Wanderer" (handout)

Old English Personal Pronouns, Weak Verbs, and Anomalous Verbs (B--Chaps. 6-7, and 17-18)

### **Week Four--Sept 17**

Translations (handouts): The Old English Bible: Luke 7: 1-10

Luke 9: 37-45

Reading: "The Wife's Lament" and "The Husband's Message" (handout)

The Lexicon, Numerals, Preterit-Present Verbs (B--Chaps. 23 and 25)

### **Week Five--Sept 24**

Charms, Medical Recipes, Riddles

"Pagan Survivals and Popular Belief," John D. Niles (G--pp. 126-141)

Translations: *Bald's Leechbook* (selections) (handout)

The Mandrake (B--p.24)

Readings: Old English Charms (handout)

Riddles (handout)

Adjectives, Possessive Pronouns, Participles, Comparison (B--Chaps. 10, 12, and 24)

### **Week Six--Oct 1**

Hagiography

"The Saintly Life in Anglo-Saxon England," Michael Lapidge (G--243-263)

Translation: Matthew and Andrew in the City of the Cannibals (B--pp. 203-219)

Subordinate Clauses, Conjunctions, Relative Clauses (B--Chapt. 9)

**Week Seven--Oct 8**

Hagiography--continued

Translation: Matthew and Andrew in the City of the Cannibals (B--pp. 203-219)

Reading: "The Dream of the Rood" (handout)

Strong Verbs and Contract Verbs (B--Chapts. 19-22)

**Week Eight--Oct 15**

The Old English Translation of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*

"Old English Prosody and Caedmon's Hymn," E. Talbot Donaldson (D--pp. 67-69)

Translation: Bede's Autobiography (B--p. 105)

The Story of Caedmon (B--pp. 105-108 and 125-134)

Indefinite Pronouns, Reflexives, Interrogatives (B--pp. 83 and 24)

**Week Nine--Oct 22**

Bede--continued

"The World of Anglo-Saxon Learning," Patricia Lendinaira (G--pp. 264-281)

Translation: The Story of Caedmon

Adverbs, Relative Pronoun, Passive Voice, Subjunctive ((B--Chapts. 9 and 24)

**Week Ten--Oct 29**

Anglo-Saxon Prose and Poetry

"Perceptions of Transcience," Christine Fell (G--pp. 172-189)

"The Nature of Old English Prose," Janet Bately (G--pp. 71-87)

Translation: King Alfred's Preface (B--pp. 180-183)

Reading: "Deor" (handout)

**Week Eleven--Nov 5****Student Research Presentations--Part I****Week Twelve--Nov 12**

*Beowulf*--The Text and Translation

Preface (D--pp. vii-x)

The Translation (D--pp. vii-x)

"The Uses of Uncertainty: On the Dating of *Beowulf*," Nicholas Howe (D--pp. 179-189)

*Beowulf* (D--pp. 3-23)

**Week Thirteen--Nov 19**

*Beowulf*--Old English Prosody

"The Nature of Old English Verse," Donald G. Scragg (G--pp. 55-70)

"Old English Poetry" (B--264-288)

*Beowulf* (D--pp. 23-37)

**Week Fourteen--Nov 26--Thanksgiving Break****Week Fifteen--Dec 3**

*Beowulf*--Criticism

"Beowulf", Fred C. Robinson (G--pp. 142-159)

"Heroic Values and Christian Values," Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe (G--pp. 107-125)

"A Female Stereotype Examined," Joyce Hill (D--pp. 153-166)

"The Female Mourner at Beowulf's Funeral," Helen Bennett (D--pp. 167-178)

*Beowulf* (D--pp. 37-52)

**Week Sixteen--Dec 10**

**Reading of Student Research Projects--Part II-- and Review for Final Exam**